



PUBLIC COMMENT
STAGE 3 – SEPTEMBER, 1979

KLUANE
NATIONAL PARK

**PLANNING
PROGRAM**



Parks Canada Parcs Canada

To All Participants
Kluane National Park Planning Program
Stage Three

As you know, in late May and early June of this year, Parks Canada hosted eight public meetings to discuss the Kluane Management Plan Proposal. These meetings took place in Haines Junction, Whitehorse, Vancouver, Edmonton and Winnipeg, with attendance totalling approximately 200 people. Since that time, we have received 92 written submissions (letters, briefs, and questionnaires) dealing with the proposal. Those comments, concerns and ideas are being examined and discussed by the planning team. The team will pay particular attention to the proposals which received substantial opposition.

When this review is completed, a final plan proposal will be prepared and submitted to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada. When approved it will become the Management Plan for Kluane National Park. You will be receiving a summary of the approved Management Plan.

The report which follows will give you a general idea of how people felt about the Kluane Management Plan Proposal.

On behalf of Parks Canada, the planning team would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to present us with their opinions.

1. Plan Proposal - General Comments

Many respondents gave their general support for the plan proposal. Others endorsed the plan as a whole, but had concerns about some parts of it. Those who disagreed with the proposal, believed that too many developments were being planned, and that these developments were incompatible with the wilderness character of Kluane. Public support for the plan principles was reaffirmed in the comments we received.

2. Planning Process - Public Participation

We received overwhelming support for the planning and public participation program, and encouragement for continuing this approach to decision-making in the future. Many people expressed their appreciation at being able to contribute to the park plan. Those with criticisms of the program basically felt that Parks Canada had not taken public comment

into consideration in evaluating the alternatives.

3. Resource Conservation Objective

While the resource conservation objective was widely supported, there was concern expressed about the compatibility of some elements of the plan proposal with it. Many people stated that further studies and monitoring of environmental impacts would be necessary before developments proceed. Other areas of concern included native hunting, the scale of developments, park boundaries, control of public access and resource management practices.

4. Special Preservation Areas

The concept of special preservation areas was upheld by the respondents. There was considerable criticism of the proposed developments on the west side of the Slims River in relation to providing adequate protection for the adjacent special preservation area. The need to develop sound management strategies for the protection of these areas was mentioned and there was a suggestion to preserve representative fish populations in the park.

5. Interpretive Objective

The importance of the interpretation program in this park was emphasized by the public, particularly its role in public education about wilderness values and their protection. Some people felt that the proposed plan should have included an outline for the interpretation program. It was suggested that visitors need to be informed about the park before their arrival, and ideas were put forward on how best to accomplish this.

6. Visitor Services

A wide variety of topics relating to visitor services were addressed including ideas about limiting the numbers and activities of park users. The idea of concessions in the park was discussed. Recommendations ranged from prohibiting concessions entirely, to ensuring that strict control is maintained by Parks Canada. Support was expressed for locating visitor accommodation and related services outside the park.

7. Regional Planning

The need for regional planning was emphasized by public comment. Many people felt that opportunities exist outside the park which can satisfy

the demand for recreational activities such as motorboating, camping, snowmobiling, sightseeing, horse trails, etc. The impacts on park use of paving the Haines and Alaska highway, and the pipeline construction were also mentioned as concerns.

8. Trails

While there was general support for hiking trails, horse use in the park was opposed by many people. They felt that horse use was incompatible with hiking, that there were outside opportunities for this activity and that it would harm the vegetation. Some people suggested that hiking trails should be the only form of access to the park. Others commented that the trails should be phased in slowly.

9. Wilderness Expeditions

Air support for wilderness expeditions was generally accepted, with the caution that strict controls would be necessary. It was suggested that limits should be set on the number of expeditions allowed, and also that air support could be provided to hikers.

10. Alder Creek Valley

Many people supported the Alder Creek Valley proposal for a public transit system, trails, and shuttle boat service on Mush and Bates Lakes. Some felt that certain conditions should be imposed such as: operation of facilities by Parks Canada, development only in response to demonstrated demand, and controls to minimize impacts. Those who were opposed, generally believed that all motorized activities should be excluded from the park.

11. St. Elias Lake

The St. Elias Lake Wilderness recreation area was generally supported.

12. Quill Creek

The proposal for the Quill Creek trail head and parking area was seen as acceptable.

13. Slims River - West Side

The majority of people who commented on this proposal were opposed to the general access road running so close to special preservation areas, the potential environmental impacts, and the difficulty of controlling visitors. Many people suggested that a public transit system would be

more appropriate for the Slims River, west side.

14. Slims River - East Side

The Slims River, east side proposal for the transit system/inclined railway received more public comment than any other issue. The majority of people commenting opposed the proposal, believing it to be incompatible with the wilderness character of the park. There was also some opposition to the interim use of helicopters, and questions were raised about the demand for and cost of such a facility.

15. Kathleen Lake

Comments about the Kathleen Lake day use and camping area centred around the use of motorboats and snowmobiles on the lake. Many people opposed these uses, feeling them to be incompatible with the park's wilderness theme, and believing that opportunities exist outside the park for these activities. A few people felt that the tour boat service would be sufficient without allowing private motorboats, while others wanted to see all motorized activity removed from the park.

16. Alsek Pass

In discussion about the Alsek Pass proposal, some people disagreed with the special purpose road for interpretive tours, because of the potential for conflict between grizzly bears and humans.

17. Haines Junction

Haines Junction was generally accepted as the centre for park operations and interpretation.

18. Sightseeing

Many people opposed sightseeing flights over the park as being detrimental to the wilderness experience. Those who found it to be acceptable, cautioned that strict controls should be developed. Some people suggested that the Department of Transport should be approached to restrict or prohibit air travel over the park.

19. Zoning

The Parks Canada zoning system was complimented. We received a suggestion that the Slims River corridor should be changed from Zone IV to Zone I, so that the special preservation area would not be compromised. It was also requested that the special purpose road in the Dezadeash River be

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reviewed, since every major valley had a portion classified as Zone III.

20. Area Planning

The need for carrying capacity studies, the protection of special preservation areas, and public involvement when conducting area planning were pointed out here.

21. Implementation

In terms of implementation of the plan proposals, the two major public concerns were whether funds would be available, and the need for a detailed implementation schedule.

22. Analysis of Alternative Plan Proposals

Relative to this topic, several people stated that Alternative One should have been the basis for the plan proposal, and some felt that public opinion had not received adequate consideration in the analysis of alternative plan proposals.

23. Environmental Assessment and Review

The topics discussed here included the need for public involvement in the process, the necessity of further study of development proposals, and the establishment of monitoring programs to assess the impacts of developments.

24. Boundaries

The need for inclusion in the park of the Burwash Uplands area, and the effect of native land claims on the park boundaries were the subject of public comment.

25. Policy Considerations

Public comment was received on policy matters related to aerial sightseeing, motorized activities, concessions, native rights, and resource management. Support was also expressed for the new National Parks Policy.

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